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Data on selection criteria for admission to small (under 1000 students) junior colleges were examined. Questionnaires were sent to 375 small colleges, of whom 275 responded (139 public, 48 private, and 86 church-related). Nine criteria were used for admissions selection: (1) high school record, (2) other standard test scores, (3) principal's or counselor's recommendation, (4) rank in class, (5) scholastic aptitude test scores, (6) personal interviews, (7) other recommendations, (8) extra-curricular record, and (9) National Merit Scholarship Qualification Test. The first was used by nearly all of the colleges; the last, by only a few. Of the three kinds of college, generally speaking, the public ones presented the least number of admissions barriers, the private colleges had the most, and the church related schools were in between. This indicated that the public colleges accepted most applicants (94%, in accordance with the usual open-door policy); the private schools, the fewest (71%); and the church-supported schools, 83%. The students actually enrolling in each case, of course, were fewer than the number accepted for admission. The attrition rate for accepted applicants was lowest for the public institutions, next for the church-related ones, and highest for the private schools. (HH)

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HARCUM JUNIOR COLLEGE
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SMALLER JUNIOR COLLEGE ADMISSIONS CRITERIA, SELECTIONS AND ENROLLMENTS

1. Professional journals and non-professional magazines are replete with articles regarding college admissions practices. Many of these view with alarm the keen competition for entrance, while others decry the 'open-door' policy of admitting all candidates without regard to level of academic achievement or potential.

2. Many high school guidance counselors have leveled charges at college admissions personnel for their lack of candor, while college staff personnel, in turn, have been known to criticize high school counselors for misrepresenting colleges to high school students.

3. In the midst of these charges and counter-charges it may help clear away some of the confusion by ascertaining what criteria are utilized by smaller junior colleges (less than 1000 student-body) in deciding which applicants to admit. Additionally, as a corollary to this determination, to what extent do such colleges select and enroll students from among their freshman applicants?

4. Data to answer these two questions was obtained for September 1967 freshman enrollments by circularizing a brief questionnaire among the 375 'small' junior colleges in the United States. Two hundred and seventy-five (275) or 73% responded; their replies are summarized in the following tabulations.

5. Throughout, all percentages reported are rounded off to the nearest whole number and reflect the proportion of the sub-group (i.e., public, private or church-related) that responded to the particular item. Included among the respondents were 139 public, tax-supported institutions, 48 private, independently financed and controlled colleges and 86 private, church-related schools.

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Table 1: - Admissions Selection Criteria Among Public, Private & Church-related Junior-Colleges

Criterion	Public	Private	Church-rel.
1.High school record	94%	100%	97%
2.Other standardized test scores	60	62	44
3.Principal's or school counselor's recommendations	35	90	74
4.Rank in class	35	80	62
5.Scholastic aptitude test scores	31	52	53
6.Personal interviews	22	68	39
7.Other recommendations	13	46	55
8.Extra-curricular record	9	56	21
9.Nat'l Merit Scholarship Qual. Test scores	1	18	5

6. From a review of Table 1 it is evident that great variations exist among the three groups in the extent of their utilization of these nine criteria. The range of use is from 1% to 100% and all three groups consider the previous academic record of achievement (high school record) most frequently (94 to 100%).

7. The admissions criteria which at least half of each group used are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: - Admissions Criteria Which Half or More Utilize

Criterion	Public	Private	Church Rel.
1.High school record	94%	100%	97%
2.Principal's or counselor's recommendation		90	74
3.Rank in class		80	62
4.Personal interview		68	
5.Other standardized test scores	60	62	
6.Extra-curricular activities		56	
7.Other recommendations			55
8.Scholastic aptitude test scores		52	53

8. What Table 2 does not reveal is that most publicly controlled institutions are 'non-selective' in the sense that if their admissions requirements are completed (usually high school graduation), the applicant is accepted. Although only 27 of the 137 public tax-supported colleges stated specifically that they had an 'open-door' admissions policy, the high percentage of admissions selections, as well as enrollments, (as evidenced in Table 3), clearly indicates that in reality most have an 'open-door' admissions policy. In view of this fact it is not surprising to find that only two criteria are utilized by at least 50% of the public institutions.

9. The same three criteria are most frequently used among the private non-church and private church-related colleges. It is further noted that 50% or more of the private non-church related institutions employ the greatest number of different admissions criteria, the only criterion non-represented being "other recommendations." Also, " personal interviews" and "extra-curricular activities" are considered as admissions criteria only by the half or more of the private, non-church related colleges.

10. For the majority of colleges in each of the three groups, the public ones offer the least number of admissions hurdles, the private colleges the greatest number and the church-related fall in between. The general pattern of differences in admissions criteria is further reflected in the selection and enrollment differences among the three groups. Table 3 summarizes the selection and enrollment averages for the three groupings, the highest percentage of applicant selections and enrollments being among public institutions, followed by church-related and non-church related in that order.

Table 3: - Average Percentages of Applicant Selections and Enrollments

Type of Institution	% Selections	% Enrollments
1. Public	94%	84%
2. Church-related	83	72
3. Private	71	55

11. As Table 3 reveals, the greatest institutional selectivity is exercised by the private colleges (only 71% acceptances). Equally interesting is the fact that the highest accepted-applicant attrition among private institutions (71 down to 55%) indicates that students applying to these colleges exercise their college-preferences to a considerable degree.

12. Conversely the least institutional selectivity occurs at the public, tax-supported colleges (94%). They are often required by legislative mandate or other governing policy to accept all applicants who are local high school graduates. Again, the lowest accepted-applicant attrition occurs among applicants to public institutions, (from 94 to 84%).

13. The church-related colleges are middle-of-the-roaders, both in the percentage of selections (83%) and applicant attrition losses, (from 83 to 72%).

14. Table 3 summarizes the percentage differences among some 275 colleges regarding their admissions selections and enrollments. Are these differences statistically significant? To calculate the significance of the difference between two obtained means or averages the following formula was applied to the data; the results are summarized in Tables 4 and 5.

$$\sigma_D = \sqrt{\sigma^2_{M_1} + \sigma^2_{M_2}}$$

Table 4: - Applicant Selection - The Reliability of the Difference Between Two Averages

Percent Selections		$D/\sigma D$	Chances in 100
PUBLIC	PRIVATE		
94%	71%	2.2	99
PUBLIC	CHURCH-REL.		
94%	83%	.75	77
PRIVATE	CHURCH-REL.		
71%	83%	.90	82

D = The difference between the averages of the two groups compared

σD = The standard error of the differences between the averages

15. An obtained difference between two averages is considered to be significant where the odds are great that the true difference between the groups is greater than zero. It is customary to take a $D/\sigma D$ of 3 as indicative of virtual certainty that the true difference between the two groups is greater than zero. (Stated in terms of probability, when $D/\sigma D$ equals 3, there is only 1 chance in 1000 that the true difference between the two groups is not greater than zero.)

16. The chances in 100 of a significant difference in applicant selection between each two of these groups is listed in Table 4. It is clearly evident that the chances, or probability, of such statistically significant differences is substantial in each of the three comparisons. Therefore it can be concluded with a high degree of likelihood (probability) that the differences in selection percentages among the three groups is not a mere chance variation, but does in fact represent statistically reliable differences in the selection practices among the three groups.

Table 5: - Applicant Enrollments - The Reliability of The Difference Between Two Averages

PERCENT ENROLLMENTS		D/σ D	Chances in 100
PUBLIC	PRIVATE		
84%	55%	1.15	87
PUBLIC	CHURCH-REL.		
84%	72%	.55	71
PRIVATE	CHURCH-REL.		
55%	72%	.65	74

D = The difference between the averages of the two groups compared

σ D = The standard error of the differences between the two averages.

17. As Table 5 reveals, there is less probability of significant enrollment differences between each two of these groups than is the case for applicant selection practices. Considerable variations exist within each of the three groups in their percentage of applicant enrollments. As a consequence of these wide variations the standard deviations are large, the standard error of difference between each two of the groups is large, and the chances of a significant difference between groups is therefore lessened.

Table 6: - College-group Ranking for Admissions Criteria, Applicant Selections and Enrollments

ITEMS	PRIVATE	CHURCH-REL.	PUBLIC
1. Most number of admissions criteria	1	2	3
2. Greatest admissions selectivity	1	2	3
3. Highest applicant-attrition	1	2	3

18. In summary, as Table 6 indicates, among small junior colleges throughout the United States:

a) For the majority of each group (public, private and church-related), the least number of admissions requirements are utilized by public, tax-supported colleges with 'open-door' admissions policies. The greatest number of admissions criteria are required by private colleges and church-related colleges are between the two groups.

b) This same pattern of differences is reflected in the selection statistics reported, private colleges exercising the greatest selectivity, public colleges least, and church-related between the two.

c) The applicant-attrition rate, as reflected in enrollment averages, follows the same pattern. The highest degree of applicant selectivity occurs among private college applicants, followed by applicants to church-related and public colleges, in that order.

d) The probability of the selection and enrollment differences among these groups being statistically significant appears quite high. The chances in 100 range from a low of 71 for public and church-related applicant enrollments to a high of 99 for differences in selection among public and private small junior colleges.

19. Based upon the data developed through this questionnaire study, it therefore appears reasonable to conclude that both applicant and institutional selectivity is greatest at small, private junior colleges; least selective at public colleges and between these two for church-related institutions.

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